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## BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

### EXPOSITION.

CHRISTIANITY, including Roman and Greek Catholics, the Protestants and all the smaller sects, may lay claim to about twenty-six per cent. of the inhabitants of the earth, and ranks, in number of adherents, as the second greatest religion. It is considerably surpassed by Buddhism which is calculated by Prof. Rhys Davids to count five hundred million adherents, or forty per cent. of all the inhabitants of the earth.<sup>1</sup> The next religions in order are Hinduism with thirteen, and Islam with twelve and one half per cent. In addition we have one half per cent. Jews, and eight per cent. of other creeds of less importance.

Now it is a strange fact that Buddhism and Christianity, constituting together sixty-six per cent., which is considerably more than one half of mankind, possess several most important features in common, and their agreement cannot be a product of mere chance. It is well known that many Christian missionaries, for instance, Huc and Gabet, the Jesuits,<sup>2</sup> were quite at a loss to account for so many

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<sup>1</sup> For details see the statistical tables on pp. 4-5 of Rhys David's *Buddhism* published in the series of *Non-Christian Religious Systems*, London, 1890.

The objection has been made that the Chinese Buddhists are at the same time adherents of Confucius and Táo and it is claimed that if the number of Buddhists were reduced to those who are true Buddhists, and nothing but Buddhists, Christianity could easily be proved to be numerically the first religion of the world. This may be true, but is this method of using statistics legitimate? Would it not in that case be fair to apply the same restriction to both sides? The number of Christians would shrink in no less degree if we counted the real Christians, or at least the confessed Christians only, which in the United States would reduce them to the churchd people who are less than one-tenth of the entire population.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in *The Monist*, Vol. IV, No. 3, p. 418.

striking coincidences, and Bishop Bigandet, the Apostolic Vicar of Ava and Pegu, writes :

"Most of the moral truths, prescribed by the Gospel, are to be met with in the Buddhistic scriptures. . . . In reading the particulars of the life of the last Buddha Gaudama, it is impossible not to feel reminded of many circumstances relating to our Saviour's life, such as it has been sketched out by the Evangelists."

The idea of a Buddhistic origin of Christianity has been suggested more than once ; but it is incumbent upon us to state that some of the men who must be regarded as the most competent to judge this matter are either extremely reticent or scorn the suggestion as quite impossible. While it is true that Arthur Lillie and Rudolf Seydel, who have done most to make the theory popular, introduce many vague speculations, we cannot regard a refutation of some of their vagaries as sufficient to settle the subject. No argument has as yet been offered to dispose of the hypothesis, which possesses, to say the least, a great probability in its favor. It is our intention here to enumerate some of the most salient facts so as to show them in their full importance, in the hope that specialists will give us more light on the subject. We repeat the motto which Albrecht Weber inscribed upon the title-page of his *Indische Literaturgeschichte* :

" Nil desperari !  
Auch hier wird es tagen."

The agreement of the ethical spirit of both religions, Buddhism and Christianity, appears the more striking from our being confronted with an obvious difference between their dogmatologies. Christians believe in God, soul, and immortality, while Buddhists aspire to reach Nirvâna. They have no such terms as God and soul. On the contrary, they reject the ideas of a personal Creator of the world and of an indissoluble soul-unit, an âtman, or ego-entity in man, and thus they are decried by Christians as atheists and deniers of the existence of the soul. Having explained in a previous article that Buddhism is not negative, that its Nirvâna is neither more nor less positive than the Christian heaven, and that Buddha only rejects the gratuitous assumption of a metaphysical soul-agent behind the soul, not the existence of the soul itself, we shall now review

the most obvious similarities and dissimilarities of Buddhism and Christianity ; and we come to the conclusion that, *supposing no historical connexion exists between the two faiths, their agreement must be regarded as very remarkable ;* for in that case we must recognise the fact, that *both Buddhists and Christians, facing the same problems of life, solve them in a similar spirit although using different modes of expression.* It would go far to prove that *the basic truths of both religions are deeply rooted in the nature of things* and cannot be supposed (as is the theory of supernaturalistic dualism) to stand in contradiction to the cosmic order of the world or to the laws according to which social institutions develop.

#### BUDDHA AND CHRIST.

Let us briefly recapitulate the similarities between Buddhism and Christianity.

According to the sacred legends, Buddha, like Christ, was of royal, not of priestly, lineage ; and his life while he was still a babe was jeopardised on account of the transcendent glory of his future. The chapter entitled “The Fear of Bimbisâra,”<sup>1</sup> contains a parallel to the story of Herod’s massacre of the infants in Bethlehem. The state ministers of Maghada make inquiry if there be any one capable of depriving the king of his regal power. Two of their messengers find among the Shâkyas an infant newly born, the first begotten of his mother, who would either become a universal monarch or a Buddha. On their return they exhort the king “to raise an army and destroy the child, lest he should overturn the empire of the king.” But Bimbisâra (unlike Herod of the New Testament) refuses to commit the crime.

The same story is told of Krishna, who is persecuted as an infant by the tyrant of Madura. The latter, unable to find the boy, ordains the massacre of all the children of male sex born during the night of Krishna’s birth.

Both Buddha and Christ led a life of poverty. Both wandered about without a home, without a family, without property. They

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<sup>1</sup> Beal, *Romantic History of Buddha*, pp. 103-104.

lived like the lilies of the field, and preached to all people, to rich and poor alike, without distinction of class, the gospel of the deliverance from evil.

Both Buddha and Christ, according to the canonical books of their respective religions were hailed soon after their birth, as the saviours of the world, by celestial spirits, by a religious prophet, and by sages. Dêvas, like the angels in the Christian Gospel, sing hymns. Asita is the Christian Simeon; the Nâga-râjas are the Magi. Aged women are also mentioned, who, like Anna, bless the baby.<sup>1</sup>

We read in the Tibetan *Life of Buddha*<sup>2</sup>:

"It was the habit of the Çakyas to make all new-born children bow down at the feet of a statue of the yaksha Çakyavardana; so the king took the young child to the temple, but the yaksha bowed down at his feet. . . . When the king saw the yaksha bow at the child's feet he exclaimed, 'He is the god of gods!' and the child was therefore called Devatideva."

The apocryphal Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew contains a similar passage<sup>3</sup>:

"Now it came to pass that when the most blessed Mary, with her little Infant, had entered the temple, all the idols were prostrate on the earth, so that they all lay upon their faces wholly shattered and broken."

Both Buddha and Christ excelled their teachers. Both were greeted by a woman who was delighted with their personal beauty. The "noble virgin Kisâ Gotamî" bursts forth into the song:

"Blessed indeed is the mother,  
Blessed indeed is the father,  
Blessed indeed is the wife,  
Who owns this lord so glorious."—*Birth Stories*, p. 80.

This reminds one of the incident mentioned in Luke xi, 27:

<sup>1</sup> See Ashvaghosha's *Life of Buddha*, verses 39-40.—*Sacred Books of the East*, (afterwards cited as S. B. of E.) vol. xix, pp. 1-20.

<sup>2</sup> *The Life of Buddha and the Early History of His Order, Derived from Tibetan Works in the Bkah-Hgyur and Bstan-Hgyur*, translated by W. Woodville Rockhill, p. 17. See also S. Beal, *Romantic History of Buddha*, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup> *The Apocryphal Gospels*, tr. by B. Harris Cowper, 4th ed. p. 63. See also *The Arabic Gospel of the Infancy*, *ibid.*, p. 178.

"And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked."

The word *Nibbuta*, i. e. "blessed, happy, peace," reminds Buddha of *Nibbuti*, i. e., *Nibbana*.<sup>1</sup> He says:

"By what can every heart attain to lasting happiness and peace?

"And to him whose mind was estranged from sin the answer came, 'When the fire of lust is gone out then peace is gained; when the fires of hatred and delusion are gone out, then peace is gained; when the troubles of mind, arising from pride, credulity, and all other sins, have ceased, then peace is gained!' Sweet is the lesson this singer makes me hear, for the Nirvâna of Peace is that which I have been trying to find out. This very day I will break away from household cares! I will renounce the world! I will follow only after the Nirvâna itself!"

In a similar spirit Christ replies (Luke xi, 28):

"Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."

Both Buddha and Christ were tempted by the Evil One.<sup>2</sup>

Both Buddha and Christ confessed their mission to be the establishing on earth of a kingdom of righteousness;<sup>3</sup> they sent out their disciples to preach the gospel. Said Buddha:

"Go ye now, O Bhikkhus, and wander, for the gain of the many, for the welfare of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, for the gain, and for the welfare of gods and men. Let not two of you go the same way. Preach, O Bhikkhus, the doctrine which is glorious in the beginning, glorious in the middle, glorious in the end, in the spirit and in the letter; proclaim a consummate, perfect, and pure life of holiness. There are beings whose mental eyes are covered by scarcely any dust, but if the doctrine is not preached to them, they cannot attain salvation. They will understand the doctrine. And I will go also, O Bhikkhus, to Uruvelâ, to Senâninigama, in order to preach the doctrine."<sup>4</sup>

Both Buddha and Christ refused to find recognition by pandering to the superstitions of those who seek for signs;<sup>5</sup> Buddha posi-

<sup>1</sup>*Birth Stories*, p. 80, and Spence Hardy, *Manual*, p. 160.

<sup>2</sup>Compare Ashvagoshâ's *Life of Buddha*, chapter xiii, "Defeats of Mâra, S. B. of E., vol. xix, p. 147, with Luke iv. 2, Matth. iv, 1-7, Mark i, 13.

<sup>3</sup>See the *Dhamma-chakka-ppavattana-Sutta*,—viz., on "The Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness,"—S. B. of E., vol. xi, p. 146, and Bigandet, p. 125.

<sup>4</sup>See *Mahāvagga* i, ii, p. 112, S. B. E., vol. xiii; compare also Ashvagoshâ's *Life of Buddha*, p. 183, with Mark iii, 14, and Luke ix, 2.

<sup>5</sup>See Luke xi, 16, and *passim*.

tively forbade miracles.<sup>1</sup> And yet to both innumerable miracles were attributed.

Of both we read that they walked on the water. The origin of the Buddhist legend can be traced to the allegorical expression of crossing the stream of worldliness (*samsâra*) and reaching the other side, which is the shore of celestial rest (*Nirvâna*). There is no such spiritual meaning in Christianity, or, if there was one, the metaphor has been obliterated.

At a marriage-feast both Buddha and Christ miraculously helped the host to entertain his guests. In Buddha's presence, as we are told in the story of the marriage-feast at Jambunada,<sup>2</sup> a small supply of food proves over and over sufficient for a great number of guests. The idea of turning water into wine, at the marriage at Cana,<sup>3</sup> is un-Buddhistic.

Both Buddha and Christ tried asceticism for a time, and carried their fasts to the extreme. We read :

"Each day eating one hemp grain, his bodily form shrunken and attenuated, seeking how to cross (the sea of) birth and death, exercising himself still deeper and advancing further." (Ashvaghosha's *Life of Buddha*, verse 1007.)

But both gave up these methods of gaining holiness by self-mortification for a middle way.<sup>4</sup> Both were in consequence of it suspected by former believers of flagging in religious zeal.<sup>5</sup>

Both Buddha and Christ were powerful preachers, fond of parables, and concentrating their teachings in pithy aphorisms, which were both impressive and easily remembered. Both were keen thinkers, and invincible in controversies, as a rule, bringing the debate to a climax by presenting a dilemma, and always pressing the moral application of their theories. Both exercised an extraordinary influence ; they looked into the hearts of men and swayed their

<sup>1</sup> See W. W. Rockhill's *Life of Buddha*, pp. 68-69.

<sup>2</sup> *Fu Pen Hing Tsi King*, translated by Beal.

<sup>3</sup> John ii, 1, et seq.

<sup>4</sup> *Dhammapada*, verse 227 ; Chinese version of the *Dhammapada*, translated by Beal, p. 122.

<sup>5</sup> Compare Ashvaghosha's *Life of Buddha*, verses 1024, and 1222-1224, with Luke vii, 19, Matth. xi, 3.

minds through purity of motive and the authoritative earnestness of their personality. Both objected to the traditional method of clinging to the letter of religious belief which is satisfied with rituals and prayers, and both substituted for it the spirit of religious devotion and moral conduct.<sup>1</sup> Both loved to express their sentiments in paradoxes, such as, "By giving away we gain ; by losing our soul we preserve it ; by non-resistance we conquer." And both spoke in parables.<sup>2</sup> Many subjects of their parables are the same ; as such we mention the sower<sup>3</sup> and the lost son ;<sup>4</sup> the worldly fool who builds a large residence with store-rooms, but dies suddenly ;<sup>5</sup> the comparison of good deeds to seeds sown on good and bad soil, according to the nature of the people, illustrating the truth that in bad people the passions choke the growth of merit. Buddha calls the Brahmins, and Christ the Pharisees, "blind leaders of the blind."<sup>6</sup>

Both Buddha and Christ show an unexpected graciousness toward a woman sinner ;<sup>7</sup> and a Buddhist disciple had an encounter with a woman at a well analogous to that of Christ in Samaria.<sup>8</sup>

Both Buddha and Christ were, like Krishna,<sup>9</sup> transfigured shortly before death,<sup>10</sup> and above all, both inculcated the utter extinction of desire, lust, and hate in their very germ, so as to forbid

<sup>1</sup> As an instance of Buddha's method of spiritualising religious rites see the *Sigālovāda Sutta* in *Sept Suttas Pālis*, by M. P. Grimblot (Paris), p. 311.

<sup>2</sup> " ' Powerful in making comparisons,' is one of Buddha's characteristic names." —Beal, foot-note to Ashvaghoṣa's *Life of Buddha*, verse 1915, S. B. of E., xix, p. 280.

<sup>3</sup> *Sutta Nipāta*, p. 11-15, S. B. of E., Second Part.

<sup>4</sup> *Saddharmapundarika* iv.

<sup>5</sup> Beal, *Translation of Chinese Dhammapada*, p. 77.

<sup>6</sup> Compare Matthew xv, 14, with *Tevigga Sutta*, i, 15, and *Lalita Vistara*, p. 179. See also Beal's *Romantic History of Buddha*, p. 106, where the phrase occurs, "Like a blind man who undertakes to lead the blind."

<sup>7</sup> See the story of Ambapālī in *Mahāvagga* vi, 30. The courtesan Ambapālī is called "Lady Amra" in Ashvaghoṣa's *Life of Buddha*, p. 255-256.

<sup>8</sup> Compare John v, et seq., with Burnouf's *Introduction*, p. 205.

<sup>9</sup> The transfiguration of Krishna serves the purpose of strengthening the faith of his followers in the presence of danger. See Jacolliot, *The Bible in India*, p. 306.

<sup>10</sup> Compare Matthew xvii, 2, and Mark ix, 2, with *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* iv, 47, 52.



all assertion of self, even the resistance to evil, and both demand the practice of love of enemies.<sup>1</sup>

#### SIMILARITIES IN TEACHING.

There are, in addition, numerous coincidences in their utterances, so that many of the sayings of Christ and Buddha appear like two different reports of the same speech. Thus we read in the *Sutra of Forty-two Sections*, 10 :

"It is difficult for the rich and noble to be religious."

And Christ said (Matthew xix, 24, Mark x, 25, and Luke xviii, 25):

"And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

The Dharma is frequently compared to living waters, as in John iv, 14, vii, 38, Rev. xxi, 6, xxii, 17, and to a pearl, or a jewel, as in Matthew xiii, 45-46, while Nirvâna is described as a city of peace and an island of jewels,<sup>2</sup> similarly as the new Jerusalem.

Yashas, the noble youth of Benares,<sup>3</sup> visits Buddha in the night, like Nicodemus;<sup>4</sup> but if Nicodemus had been a Brahman, he would not have been mystified by Christ's proposition of the necessity of a spiritual rebirth; he would have understood the expression. The term "twice born" or "reborn" is still among Buddhists a title of honor given to priests and other men of distinction.

The coming of the Tathâgata (Buddha) is likened to the wind. We read in *The Questions of King Milinda*, page 148 :

"As the great and mighty wind which blew, even so, great king, has the Blessed One blown over the ten thousand world-systems with the wind of his love, so cool, so sweet, so calm, so delicate."

How similar, although less clear, is the passage in John iii, 8 :

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but

<sup>1</sup> Compare *Dhammapada*, 5, "Hatred ceases by love," and many other passages, with Matthew v, 44, "Love your enemies."

<sup>2</sup> See *Dhammapada*, p. 181.

<sup>3</sup> Ashvaghosha's *Life of Buddha*, p. 180, *Mahāvagga*, i, 7.

<sup>4</sup> See John iii, 2.

canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth : so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

The Dharma (viz., religion) is said to be like the salt of the ocean, one in taste throughout, which reminds us of Jesus saying that his disciples are the salt of the earth ;<sup>1</sup> and the exhortation is made by both Buddha and Christ to lay up treasures that are incorruptible and inaccessible to thieves.<sup>2</sup>

Giving is praised in preference to receiving. In Ashvaghosha's *Life of Buddha*, 1516-1517, we read :

"Giving away our food, we get more strength ; giving away our clothes, we get more beauty," etc. (S. B. of E., p. 215.)

In *The Questions of King Milinda* we find among the discussions concerning apparent contradictions explained by Nagasêma, that "the Dharma of the Tathâgata shines forth when displayed" (p. 264), which is contrasted with the injunction, "Do not let the Dharma . . . fall into the hands of those unversed with it" (page 266). Both passages find their parallels in the Christian Gospel, the former in Matthew v, 16, "Let your light shine before men," and the latter in Matthew vii, 6, "Do not cast your pearls before swine."

Buddha says (in the *Sutra of Forty-two Sections*, 28) "Guard against looking on a woman," and (in Buddhaghosha's *Parables*, p. 153) he comments upon the law "commit no adultery," that it "is broken by even looking at the wife of another with a lustful mind." Christ expresses the same idea in almost the same words, saying : "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, has committed adultery with her already in his heart." (Matthew v, 28.)

The sentence, "If thy right eye offend thee pluck it out," (Matthew v, 29), finds a parallel in the words :

"Better far with red-hot iron pins bore out both your eyes, than encourage in yourself lustful thoughts." (Ashvaghosha's *Life of Buddha*, 1762-1763.)

<sup>1</sup> *Questions of King Milinda*, iii, 7, 15, and *Chullavagga* ix, 1, 4, which compare with Matthew v, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Compare *Nidhikandasutta*, the treasure chapter, where we read of "A treasure that no wrong of others and no thief can steal," with Matthew vi, 20.

"The armor of God" is described by St. Paul (Eph. vi, 13-17):

"Wherefore, take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

"Stand, therefore, have your loins girt about with truth, and have on the breastplate of righteousness ;

"And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace ;

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

This reminds us of Ashvaghosha's *Life of Buddha*, 1761-1762 :

"Take, then, the bow of earnest perseverance, and the sharp arrow-points of wisdom.

"Cover your head with the helmet of right thought, and fight with fixed resolve against the five desires."

In the *Lalita Vistara* (page 122) we read of the "World" that "it is like a city of sand. Its foundations cannot endure," which reminds us of Matthew vii, 26.

Matthew xxiv, 35 : "My words shall not pass away," finds a parallel in *Buddhist Birth Stories*, p. 18 : "The word of the glorious Buddhas is sure and everlasting."

Both Buddha and Christ point out to their adherents the good example of worldly people. Buddha says, when rebuking his disciples for improper behavior :

"Even the laymen, O bhikkhus . . . will be respectful, affectionate, hospitable to their teachers. Do you, therefore, O bhikkhus, so let your light shine forth that you having left the world . . . may be respectful, affectionate, hospitable to your teachers," etc. (*Mahāvagga* V, 4, 2, xvii, p. 18.)

And Christ says :

"If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so?" (Matth. v, 46-47.)

Christ complains, in Matth. xi, 16-19, of the childish nature of the people whom no one can satisfy, neither John the Baptist who did not eat and drink nor the Son of Man who did eat and drink. In the same spirit Buddha says :

"They blame the man of many words, they blame the patient and quiet man, they also blame the man who seeks the happy medium." (See Beal's *Translation of the Chinese Dhammapada*, sect. xxv, p. 122. Compare *Pāli Dhammapada*, v. 227).

It is a curious coincidence that Christ, when speaking of the signs of the coming of the Son of Man, mentions "the fig tree's putting forth leaves" (Matth. xxiv, 32), while we read in the *Saddharma-pundarika*, ii, 134-136, S. B. of E., p. 58 :

"At certain times and at certain places, somehow do leaders appear in the world . . . just as the blossom of the glomerous fig-tree is rare, all so wonderful, and far more wonderful is the law I proclaim."

As the coming of the Son of Man, so his parting from life is expressed in words which present a certain similarity to Buddhistic passages. Christ says :

"Ye shall not see me" (St. John xvi, 16),

and again (Matth. xxiv, 23.)

"If any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there, believe it not."

The *Brahmajāla Sutta* (translated by Gogerly in *Sept Suttas Pālis*, p. 59) although in a different sense also speaks of Buddha that he shall not be seen again. We read :

"That which binds the teacher to existence is cut off, but his body still remains. While his body still remains he will be seen by gods and man, but after the termination of life, upon the dissolution of the body, neither gods nor men will see him." (P. iii.)

#### THE MURDER OF PARENTS.

Remarkable as these parallels are, some of which are apparently incidental, some striking, some simply curious, the list is by no means exhausted.<sup>1</sup> Let me now add a passage in which the Buddhist version may be hoped to throw light upon the Christian narrative.

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<sup>1</sup> Rudolf Seydel calls attention to a curious similarity of sound between important names, such as Māyā and Maria, Ānanda and Johannes, Sariputra and Peter, Devadatta, and Judas, each two of these characters, strange to say, being representative of the very same type and playing the same parts, those in Buddha's, these in Christ's life. But we have to add that the names Miryam, and Simeon Kephas, the Hebrew originals of Maria and Peter, resemble their Buddhistic counterparts very little and exhibit a remarkable instance of an incidental resemblance warning us not to take even striking coincidences as evidences of appropriation.

Christ's words in Matth. x, 21, "The children shall rise up against their parents and cause them to be put to death," have startled Christians in no less degree than an analogous passage in the Buddhist canon has the Buddhists. We read in the *Dhammapāda*, verse 295 :

"A true Brahman goes scatheless, though he have killed father and mother and two holy kings and an eminent man besides."

Says the translator in the footnote on page 71 :

"D'Alois following the commentary explains mother as lust, father as pride, the two valiant kings as heretical systems, etc."

And Beal quotes in the Introduction to his *Translation of the Chinese Dhammapāda* the following Buddhistic comment :

"Is not love (*Tanhā*) which covets pleasure more and more, and so produces 'birth'—is not this the mother (*mātā*) of all? And is not 'ignorance' (*avidyā*) the father (*pitā*) of all? To destroy these two, then, is to slay father and mother. And again, to cut off and destroy those ten '*kleshas*' (Ch. *shī*) which like the rat or the secret poison, work invisibly, and to get rid of all the consequences of these faults (i. e., to destroy all material associations), this is to wound a Rahat. And to cause offence and overthrow a church or assembly, what is this but to separate entirely the connexion of the five *skandhas*? ('five aggregates,' which is the same word as that used above for the church). And again to draw the blood of a Buddha, what is this but to wound and get rid of the seven-fold body by the three methods of escape. . . . And in order to explain and enforce this more fully, the World-honored One added the following stanzas :

Lust, or carnal desire, this is the mother,  
'Ignorance,' this is the father,  
The highest point of knowledge, this is Buddha,  
All the '*kleshas*' these are the Rahats.  
The five *skandhas*, these are the priests,  
To commit the five unpardonable sins  
Is to destroy these five  
And yet not suffer pains of hell."

Christ's startling prediction that "the children will rise against their parents and cause them to be put to death" bears an obvious likeness to these Buddhistic passages and will, on the supposition of an historical connexion between both religions, find, if considered in the light of the above quotation, a natural explanation.

## THE DOCTRINE OF NON-RESISTANCE.

In pushing their doctrine of kindness and love of enemies to the utmost extreme, both Buddha and Christ seem to have had but little regard for the ethics of struggle. We purposely say "seem," for the doctrine of non-resistance is one of many paradoxes which admit of a perfectly satisfactory explanation; it has been interpreted by orthodox Christian theologians and also by Buddhists to mean that a man's disposition of heart must be such that he does not defend his right because it is *his*, but because it is *right*; that selfishness and personal vanity must not be our motives of action; and that a man must be willing to give up, if need be, not only what is taken from him, but other things in addition. Thus we are told by Christian exegetists, that Christ does not demand of us to give up the mantle to him who robs us of our coat, for Christ himself defended his right when unjustly beaten. Christ himself carried on a bitter warfare against those whom he called hypocrites, and generations of vipers. He showed the belligerent spirit of his zeal when he cast out those who bartered in the temple and held pigeons for sale, which act was probably an emphatic protest against bloody sacrifices, so extremely offensive to the Essene brotherhood. And Buddha, too, with all his gentleness, was himself a powerful, although always kind-hearted, controversialist; and his disciples are frequently compared to warriors who with spiritual weapons had unflaggingly and zealously to struggle for the truth.

## THE SANGHA AND THE CHURCH

There are also striking resemblances in the development of the Sangha, or Buddhist brotherhood, and the Church. Universality is a marked feature of both religions. Thus Buddhism, as well as Christianity, is possessed of a missionary spirit; anxious to let everybody partake of the blessing of their religion, they sent out apostles to all known countries of the earth. Councils were held to settle disputes as to the right doctrine. A sacred literature originated first of the Master's sayings, with incidental mentionings of

the occasions on which they were uttered ; and later hagiographers undertook to tell the whole story of his life. There is an increasing tendency perceptible in the development of both Buddhistic and Christian thought, of more and more exaggerating the marvellous and of adding legendary elements. The sober spirit of Western civilisation, however, kept these tendencies in check by rejecting the apocryphal books, which also bear in several of their narratives a striking resemblance to Buddhistic tales.

There were monks in Buddhism long before Christianity existed ; and Buddhist monks wear rough garments, live under the same, or almost the same, restrictions, have tonsures, and employ rosaries. They live as hermits or in cloisters, and the clergy of Tibet possess a hierarchy with institutions which are quite analogous to that of the Roman Catholic Church. They have processions, they baptise,<sup>1</sup> they sprinkle with holy water, and use the confessional.

There are analogies even of sects and heresies. The Dokeristic heresy believed that Christ, because he was God, could have suffered no pain ; his whole being was uncontaminated with material existence, and his body was mere appearance, a sham—hence the name of the sect from *δοκῆιν*, to seem. This view is represented in the apocryphal “Gospel according to St. Peter,” in which we read (verse 10): “And they brought two malefactors and crucified the Lord between them ; but he kept silence, as *feeling* no pain.” Dokerism is also one of the Buddhist heresies, as may be learned from a passage quoted from the *Fo-pan-ni-pan-king*, an expanded rendering of the *Parinirvāṇa-Sūtra*, translated into Chinese by Dharmarakṣa (*Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XIX, p. 365, et seqq). The Tathāgata says to Chunda, the smith :

“To those who as yet have no knowledge of the nature of Buddha, to these the body of Tathāgata seems capable of suffering, liable to want (but to others it is not

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<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to say whether or not baptism was established among the early Buddhists ; if so, it is probable that the ceremony is older than Buddhism. We find bathing in the Ganges mentioned as a religious rite in Ashvagoshā's *Life of Buddha*, verses 164–165. But no further explanation is given concerning it. Was it an ablution, or did it symbolise the crossing of the stream of saṃsāra ? It is remarkable that St. Paul (I. Cor. iv, 1–4) says that the crossing of the Red Sea was the baptism of the children of Israel.

so); at the time when Bodhisattva received the offering of food and drink (he was supposed to have eaten the food). . . . so now having received your offering, he will preach the law. But still, as in the former case he ate not, so neither does he eat now."—Transl. by Samuel Beal, *l. c.*, p. 367.

There are two incidents which link Buddhism and Christianity together, in a quite peculiar way. On the one hand, Buddha has been received among the saints under the name of St. Josaphat,<sup>1</sup> so that in this respect the followers of Buddha must appear to Christians as a kind of Christian sect, however incomplete their dogmatic Christianity may be. On the other hand, Buddha prophesied that the next Buddha after him would be Maitrêya, the Buddha of kindness, and without doing any violence to Buddha's words, this prophecy may be said to be fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. Thus the Christians may be said to be Buddhists that worship Maitrêya under the name of Christ.

#### THE MAIN DIFFERENCE.

The similarities of Christianity and Buddhism are the more remarkable as among the dissimilarities there is one which exhibits an almost irreconcilable contrast. All those members of the various Christian denominations who call themselves its orthodox representatives, regard the belief in a personal God (an Îshvara) as the foundation of their religious faith. No wonder that they characterise Buddha's religion as atheism, denouncing it as unsatisfactory, or even nihilistic, and vigorously repudiate any kinship which might be supposed to obtain between both creeds.

The God-idea, representing the ultimate authority of conduct, is so fundamental in Christianity that Christians cannot think of any atheistic religion; they actually identify religion with belief in

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<sup>1</sup> Josaphat is a corruption of Bodhisattva. For a detailed account of the Barlaam and Josaphat literature see Rhys Davids's *Buddhist Birth Stories*, pp. xxxvi, et seq. Rhys Davids says on p. xli: "It was Prof. Max Müller, who has done so much to infuse the glow of life into the dry bones of Oriental scholarship, who first pointed out the strange fact—almost incredible, were it not for the completeness of the proof—that Gotama, the Buddha, under the name of St. Josaphat, is now officially recognised and worshipped throughout the whole of Catholic Christendom as a Christian saint!"



God ; and, indeed, we confess that it is remarkable how Buddhists can dispense at all with the God-idea.

We grant that no religion can exist without a belief in the existence of an ultimate authority of conduct ; but in this sense Buddhism, too, teaches a belief in God. The Abhidharma, or Buddhist philosophy, distinctly rejects the idea of a creation by an Îshvara, i. e., a personal Creator ; but it recognises that all deeds, be they good or evil, will bear fruit according to their nature, and they teach that this law, which is ultimately identical with the law of cause and effect, is an irreversible reality ; that there are no exceptions or deviations from it. Thus, law takes to some extent the place of the God-idea, and Buddhists gain a personal attitude to it, similarly as Christians do when speaking of God, in quite a peculiar way. The doctrine of the Tri-kâya, or the three bodies, teaches that Buddha has three personalities ; the first one is the Dharma-Kâya, or the body of the law : it corresponds to the Holy Ghost in the Christian dogmatology. The second personality is the Nirmâna-Kâya, or the body of transformations ; it is transient in its various forms, and its most important and latest appearance has been Gautama Siddhârtha. This corresponds to the second person of the Christian Trinity, to God the Son, or Christ. But there is this difference : that the Nirmâna Kâya appeared before Gautama Siddhârtha in many other incarnations and will reappear in this and other worlds again ; for every one who has attained to enlightenment and reached the ideal of perfection is a Tathâgata, a Buddha, a preacher of moral truth. It is in agreement with this conception that Philo speaks of Moses as a former incarnation of the Logos. The third personality of Buddha is called Sambhoga-Kâya, or the body of bliss. It is the Christian idea of God the Father. Buddha in his capacity as Sambhoga-Kâya is described as eternal, omnipresent, and omnipotent. He is the life of all that lives and the reality of all that exists. Thus he is the All in All, in whom we live and move and have our being.

Buddhistic atheism, apparently, is not wholly unlike Christian theism.

Christianity possesses in the idea, and, indeed, in the very word

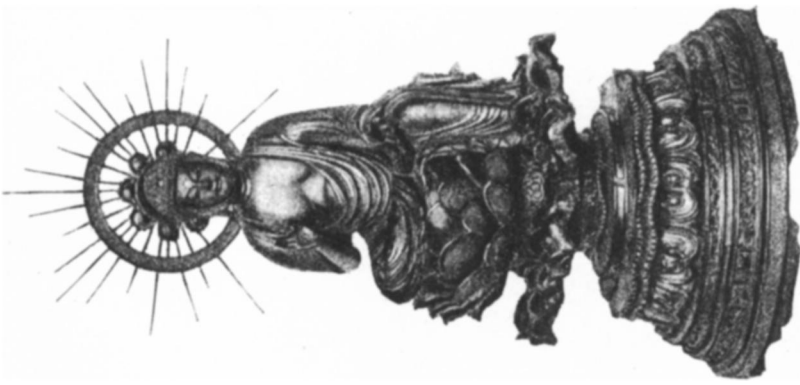


Fig. 1.

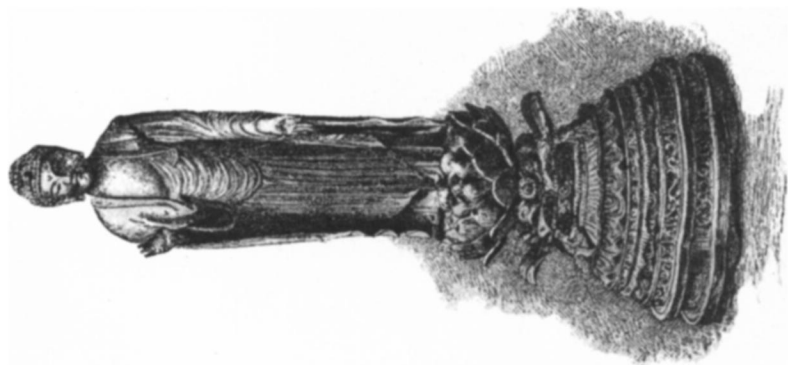


Fig. 2.

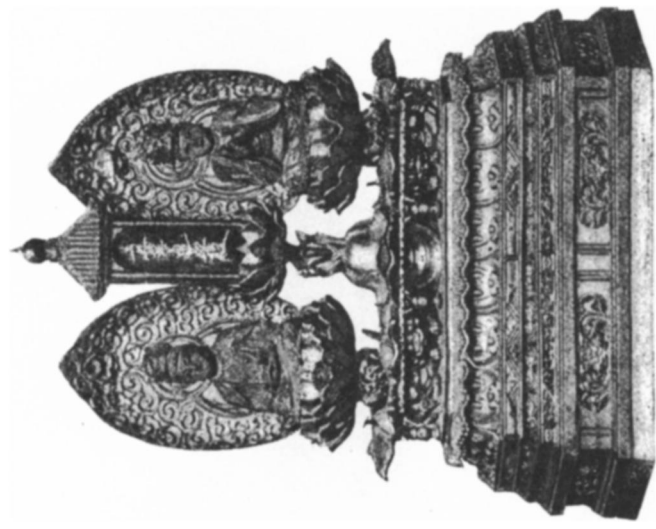


Fig. 3.

“God,” representing the authority of moral conduct in a most forcible manner, a symbol of invaluable importance; it is an advantage which has contributed not a little to make Christianity so powerful and popular, so impressive and effective as it has proved itself to be. In this little word “God,” much has been condensed, and it contains an unfathomable depth of religious comfort.

No serious thinker who has ever grappled with the problem of the God-idea can have any doubt that the conception of God as an individual being is a mere allegory symbolising a great truth which it is difficult to explain to untrained minds in purely scientific terms. There is a disadvantage and there is also an advantage in mythological terms. Let us here as everywhere learn from various methods of presenting a truth. Let us prove all and hold fast that which is good.

#### BUDDHISTIC ART.

The spirit of Buddhism also exhibits a palpable affinity with Christian conceptions in its art productions, which, we have every reason to believe, originated uninfluenced by either the technique or the taste of the Western civilisation. The difference between Western and Eastern taste is as strongly marked in religious art as in the other walks of life. Nevertheless, there is an unmistakable coincidence of aspiration, which will strike any one who visits the Buddhistic departments of the Musée Guimet at Paris, or glances over the *Illustrated Guide* of its collections. We reproduce here a few pictures which seem to us especially instructive, because they express sentiments which are not foreign to the student of Christian art.

1. Mi-rô-Kou, or Maitrêya, the Buddha to come, of gilded wood (Sixteenth Century), seated upon a lotus in an attitude as if ready to rise and proclaim to the world the Gospel of the Good Law. The halo round his head and the divinely glorious attitude of his whole person remind us of Roman Catholic conceptions of Christ, such as can be found in abundance in all Catholic countries, especially in Southern Europe and in the Spanish colonies of America.

2. Amida (Buddha Amitâbha), also of gilded wood (Fifteenth

Century), stands upon the lotus in the attitude of a teacher. In contrast to the statue of Mi-rô-Kou it emphasises the human in Buddha and reminds us of the Protestant conception of Christ, which found its noblest representation in Thorwaldsen's famous statue.

3. Sam-bô, or the Buddhistic trinity, again representing Roman Catholic taste, shows the three jewels, the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. The Dharma (in one sense the Christian logos, in another the Holy Ghost) being most appropriately represented by written words, nor is it impossible that its higher position may indicate a certain superiority over the Buddha and the Sangha. For the Buddha is the incarnation and the Sangha the continued proclamation of the Dharma.

4. Kouan-yin, a peculiar conception of Buddha (made of porcelain), represents Buddha in one of his female incarnations as the goddess of charity and motherly love. The resemblance to Roman Catholic representations of Mary, the mother of Christ, is obvious, and the coincidence loses none of its force when we consider that the mythological conception of Kouan-yin is radically different from that of Mary. Buddha is conceived not as the object of motherly love, not as the infant, but as Love itself. The statues on both sides of the chair are Hoang-tchen-saï, the disciple of Kouan-yin, and Loung-nou, the servant of Kouan-yin; the former in an attitude of worship, the latter holding in his hands a luminous pearl. The necklace of Kouan-yin contains an ornament in the shape of a cross of the Renaissance.

5. Kouan-on, the Buddha of Charity, of gilt wood (Twelfth Century), an art production of the Tendai sect, exhibits what appears to us a transition to the conception of Buddha in the form of Kouan-yin. Buddha's attitude and the grace of his appearance is almost womanly, and might serve as a statue of the Virgin.

6. The Devil as a Buddhistic monk, carved wood of the Seventeenth Century, finds many parallel productions on the pinnacles of Gothic cathedrals. There is little probability that the Japanese artist who, with great ingenuity and humor, sculptured this admirable statue, ever heard of Rabelais, whose verse from Book IV,

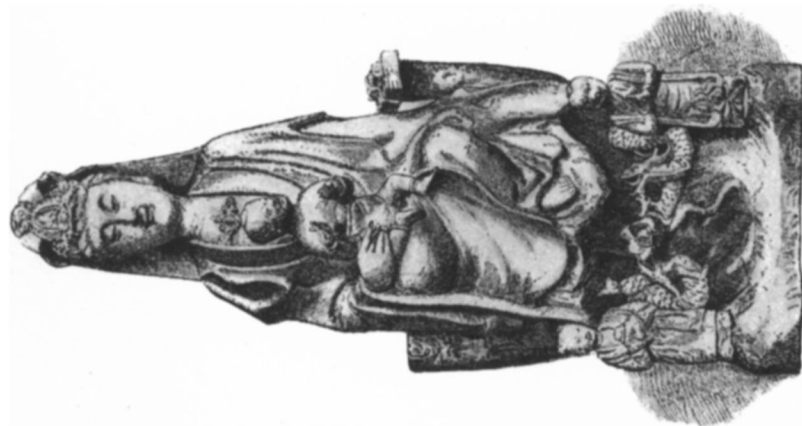


Fig. 4.



Fig. 5.



Fig. 6.

chapter xxiv, has become an English proverb, which, according to Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations*, page 772, reads as follows :

"The Devil was sick, the Devil a monk would be :  
The Devil was well, the devil a monk was he."

There is not only an obvious similarity in the religious ideas and objects of devotion, but even in religious satire, which cannot be explained by imitation, but must have originated independently in Buddhism as in Christianity.

#### THE CONNEXIONS BETWEEN THE EAST AND WEST.

The question whether Christianity and Buddhism have a common origin is perhaps less important than it appears, yet there attaches to it a peculiar interest because there is a numerically very strong section of Christians who would not allow that the noble ethical maxims of Jesus of Nazareth could have developed according to the laws of nature in the normal progress of evolution. There is certainly very little probability of a borrowing on the part of Buddhism as it is in all its essential features considerably older than Christianity. Buddha lived in the fifth century before Christ. The Buddhistic canon was settled at the time of the second council which took place about 250 B.C., and Ashoka's rock inscriptions which contain the gist of Buddha's doctrine and testify to its established existence date from the same period. This excludes at once the supposition that Buddhism is indebted to Christianity for its lofty morality and the purity of its ideals.

We must add that it remains not impossible (although not probable) that Buddhism, as it developed in its later phases in the North, has received from Christianity some modes of worship for which there would have been no place in the older Buddhism. Thus Prof. Samuel Beal believes that Christian ideas and forms of worship must have been imported into Northern India as early as 50 A.D. He considers it as highly probable that King Gondoforus of the *Legenda Aurea* is identical with Gondophares, the founder of the Scythian dynasty in Seistan Vandahâr and Sindh, coins of whose reign are mentioned by General Cunningham. (*Arch. Survey of*

*Ind.*, II, p. 59.) Professor Beal trusts that the old legend of St. Thomas's visit to India is confirmed; he does not consider, however, the possibility, which is not improbable, that the legend of St. Thomas may, like the St. Josaphat story, be a Christianised Buddhist legend. We waive the question and confine ourselves to stating that the evidences which Professor Beal introduces to prove the possibility of a Christian influence upon later Buddhism go still farther to establish the possibility of a Buddhistic influence upon Judea before the time of Christ's appearance. Professor Beal says (p. 133-134):

"The Parthian prince, Pacorus, was, as Josephus tells us, in possession of Syria and at Jerusalem. . . . Then again, the marriage of Chandragupta with a daughter of Seleucus, and the apparent knowledge possessed by the grandson of Chandragupta, the great Asoka, with the Greek King Antiochus, and his embassy to four other Greek kings,—all this shows that there must have been some connexion between India and the Western world, from the time of the establishment of Greek influence in the valley of the Oxus."

There were plenty of channels through which Buddhist doctrines could reach Palestine.

Speaking of the similarity between the Buddhist story of the wise judge and the account of Solomon's judgment, as told in the Book of Kings, Prof. Rhys Davids mentions the commercial relations that obtained in those early days between Judea and India. He says (*Buddhist Birth Stories*, pp. xlvi-xlvii):

"The land of Ophir was probably in India. The Hebrew names of the apes and peacocks said to have been brought thence by Solomon's coasting-vessels are merely corruptions of Indian names. . . . But any intercourse between Solomon's servants and the people of Ophir must, from the difference of language, have been of the most meagre extent; and we may safely conclude that it was not the means of the migration of our tale.

"Though the intercourse by sea was not continued after Solomon's time, gold of Ophir, ivory, jade, and Eastern gems still found their way to the West; and it would be an interesting task for an Assyrian or Hebrew scholar to trace the evidence of this ancient overland route in other ways."

In order to prove the possibility of an exchange of thought between India and Judea, it is not even necessary to fall back upon these old commercial relations which are difficult to trace, for we know for sure that since Alexander's time the connexions between

the East and the West in general, and especially between Buddhist countries and Judea, were quite intimate. Ashoka's rock inscriptions alone are sufficient to prove that official legations had been dispatched from India to the most important neighboring countries and to Western Asia for the sole purpose of making a strong propaganda for Buddha's religion and the Buddhistic principles of universal kindness and compassion for the suffering. The second edict mentions a legation to King Antiochus for mere humanitarian purposes. It reads as follows :

" Everywhere in the kingdom of the king Priyadarshin,<sup>1</sup> beloved of the gods, and (among those) who (are) his neighbors, as the Codas, the Pandyas, the prince of the Satiyas, the prince of the Karalas Tâmrarnî, the Yavanas<sup>2</sup> king Antiochus and (among the) others who (are) the vassal kings of Antiochus—everywhere the king Priyadarshin, beloved of the gods, founded two (kinds of) hospitals—hospitals for men and hospitals for animals. Wherever there were no healing herbs to be found, whether herbs fit for men or herbs fit for animals, to all such places and in all such places, he issued orders to have such herbs brought and planted. Also where there were no healing roots and fruits he issued orders to have (them) brought and planted. And along the roads he had trees planted and wells dug for the use of man and beast."

The thirteenth edict speaks directly of a missionary legation for spreading Buddha's religion. The first part of the inscription is mutilated. The German translator, Professor Bühler, says that from the few correctly read words of a version of the same edict preserved near Shâhbâzgarhî, and from the fragment of the Girnâr inscription, the thought of the missing lines can be restored. Having expressed remorse at the atrocities committed before his conversion in Kaliriga, the king states that it is his intention from now on to make no more conquests by the sword, but is determined to take from his free neighbors everything that can possibly be endured. He adds that even the wild tribes in the forest ought to be participants of this kindness, and concludes with the remark that he has no other desire than to treat all beings with indulgence, justice, and clemency. The part still extant reads :

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<sup>1</sup> This is the customary appellation of Ashoka.

<sup>2</sup> The Yavanas are the Greeks.



“(The beloved of the gods wishes) . . . for all creatures . . . forbearance justice, and clemency! But the following is judged of the greatest consequence by the beloved of the gods, namely, conquest by the law (Dhammavijaye). This conquest is made by the beloved of the gods as well here (in his own kingdom) as among all his neighbors. For at a distance of six hundred Yojanas lives the (king) of the Yavanas (Greeks), called Āṃtiyoga (Antiochus) his neighbor, and beyond him are four, 4, kings, one named Tulamaya (Ptolemæus), one called Aikyashudala (Alexander); (further), towards the South the Codas (Colas) and the Paṃḍiyas (Pāṇḍyas) as far as Tambapaṃṇi (Ceylon), likewise the Hida king among the Vishas (Bais), and Vajis (Vrijis), the Yavanas (the Greeks) and the Kambojas (Kābulis), among the Nābha tribes of Nabhaka, among the Bhojas and Pitinikas, among Andhras and Piladas (Puliadas)—everywhere is the doctrine of the law of the beloved of the gods followed. Even those to whom the envoys of the beloved of the gods do not go, follow the law, as soon as they have heard the comments issued by the beloved of the gods according to the law, his sermon of the law, and they shall follow it in the time to come. The conquest which by this means is everywhere accomplished fills (me) with a feeling of joy. Firmly founded is (this) joy, the joy at the conquest by the law. But (this) joy is in sooth merely something slight. The beloved of the gods holds that only of worth which has reference to the Beyond. But this religious edict is written for the following purpose. To what purpose? That my sons and grandsons (to the end of time) shall deem no other kind of conquest desirable, that if a conquest by weapons should be absolutely necessary they should exercise mercy and clemency, and that they shall only regard conquest by the law as real conquest. Such a (conquest) brings salvation here to you. But all (its joy) is the joy of effort. This, too, brings salvation here and beyond.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus there cannot be the slightest doubt that Buddhist missionaries were sent to Western Asia in the third century before the Christian era and must have made attempts to preach Buddhism.

Concerning the importation of Buddhist tales, Professor Rhys Davids says (p. xliii):

“We only know that at the end of the fourth, and still more in the third, century before Christ there was constant travelling to and fro between the Greek dominions in the East and the adjoining parts of India, which were then Buddhist, and that the birth stories were already popular among the Buddhists in Afghanistan, where the Greeks remained for a long time.”

Shall we assume with Rhys Davids that a great number of Jataka tales, such as the legend of the Kisâ-Gotamî,<sup>2</sup> the story of the ass in

<sup>1</sup> Translated from the *Zeitsch. für Morgenl. Gesellschaft*, Vol. XIV, pp. 135, 136.

<sup>2</sup> See Jacob H. Thiessen, *Die Legende von Kisâ-Gotamî*, Breslau, 1880.

the lion's skin, the jackal and the crow, and other prototypes of the so-called Æsopian fables, found their way to Greece, there to re-appear in Greek literature, while the main ideas of Buddha's religion remained utterly unknown in the West? No Western traveller, we are bid to believe, ever heard of them in the East, and no Eastern traveller ever mentioned them in the West. And yet we know that the Buddhists were burning with zeal for propagating their religion, and the Sangha sent out missionaries into all quarters of the world. It would be strange if Buddhist missionaries had gone to all neighboring countries except to Palestine, and that all kinds of Buddhist stories and wise saws were translated into other tongues, but not the essential doctrines of their sacred literature.

#### POSSIBLE BUDDHISTIC ORIGIN.

The probability that an influx of Buddhistic doctrines took place is very strong; nevertheless we do not press the theory that Christianity was influenced by Buddha's religion, but regard it as a mere hypothesis. Here is a proposition of how matters might have been:

It is certain that Buddhist missionaries, had they come to Palestine, would not have attacked the religion of the country, but would, in accordance with their traditional policy, have adapted themselves as much as possible to the current ideas of the people. They would have preached the gospel of Buddha, and would have tried to proclaim their message in the very terms of the Jewish creed. The soil was prepared for them by Isaiah and other prophets who objected to bloody sacrifices. It would be quite in accord with their methods pursued in other countries to adopt the Messiah idea, and to embody the Jewish notions into their faith. The Buddhist missionaries did not cling to Gautama Siddhârtha; they would always be as ready to preach the Buddha of the past as the Buddha to come. Since Buddha himself had proclaimed the coming of Maitrêya, the Buddha of Kindness, must it not have appeared possible to Buddhists living in Judæa and observing the religious earnestness of the Jews, that Maitrêya was to rise among the Jews? This would explain

not only the origin of the Essene movement, which otherwise appears very obscure, but also the change of the worldly idea of a Jewish Messiah into the conception of a spiritual saviour of the whole human race from sin. The first symptoms of this change are found already in the Jewish Apocrypha, especially the book of Esdras, in which "the Son of David" begins to be called "the Son of Man," an expression that was adopted by Jesus. The great mass of the Jews of the time of Jesus still expected a Messiah who would be like Judas Maccabæus, a warrior and a worldly king, a redeemer from foreign oppression, yet the Essenes and the disciples of John regarded the various dignities which tradition attributed to the Messiah, as mere similes. In their idea the Messiah would be an ascetic hermit and a wandering preacher, more like Buddha than like Herod, for his kingdom was not of this world; he was the Dharmarâja, the king of truth.

As the Brahman god, Brahma, continued to play an important part in the Buddhist mythology, so we ought to expect that Buddhist missionaries would not have attempted to deny the existence of Jehovah. Yet, knowing the sternness of Jewish monotheism, we can understand that the Jewish God could not take a place inferior to Buddha; and as Buddha on the other hand was superior to all gods, both God and Buddha could only be identified, so that Christ could say: "I and the Father are one."

Considering the fact that later Buddhism developed out of its own elements a cosmic authority of conduct which practically serves the same purpose as the Christian God-idea, we cannot regard it as strange that Buddhists who lived in Judea should have adapted the Jewish theism to the trikâya of their own faith. The result could only be a trinity conception such as taught by the church.<sup>1</sup> Now if a Buddhist brotherhood had settled in Judea, they would have recruited themselves from Jews, and we can fairly assume that they naturally would have set on foot a movement like

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<sup>1</sup> The development of the Christian Trinity is still shrouded in darkness. We know from passages in the Apocryphal Gospels that the Holy Ghost was identified by some of the old Christians with the Logos; and some considered the Third Person of the Deity as a feminine presence and the Mother of Christ.

that of the Essenes and the first Christian society at Jerusalem with its communistic ideals, its martyr spirit, and its invincible faith in the kingdom of truth.

It is often assumed that if the priority of Buddhism were proved, it would imply that Christianity would have to be regarded as a deterioration of Buddhism; it would deprive Christianity of all claim to originality, beauty, and truth. We might on the same argument say that Anglo-Saxon is a degenerated form of Low German, or that the polar bear is a degenerated species of the grizzly bear, or even that civilised man is a deteriorated anthropoid. Christianity embodies in its world-conception the best thoughts of the past from all quarters of the globe. The Logos idea was derived from Neo-Platonism, the God-idea is a Jewish tradition, baptism an Essenian rite, the holy communion reminds us partly of a Dionysian cult, partly appears to be a substitution of bread offerings in the place of bloody sacrifices;<sup>1</sup> the love of enemies was preached in a similar paradoxical form five centuries before Christ in the far East. The idea of a world-Saviour is Buddhistic. In a word, none of the elements of Christianity is radically new; nevertheless, the whole in its peculiar combination is decidedly original and marks the beginning of an era which stands in strong contrast to all the ages past.

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<sup>1</sup> Justinus Martyr (Apol. I, 68), referring to a similar rite of distributing bread among the worshippers and handing them a chalice of water to drink that obtained among the Parsees, accuses the Devil of aping the Lord. While it is not impossible that the Parsees of Justinus's time had adopted some features of the Christian Sacrament, it is certain that the institution of the haoma-offering was an old established ceremony in Zarathustra's religion. It is of Aryan origin. Haoma is the Vedic *Sôma*, and the holy meat of Myazda, small pieces of which were eaten on little cakes called "draona," consecrated in the name of deceased persons, are the Vedic *hotrd*. And it is said that he who drinks of the white haoma or Gao-kerena will on the day of resurrection become immortal. (See Darmstetter's *Introduction to the Zend Avesta in S. B. of E.*, IV, p. lxix and also the note on p. 56.) Zarathustra calls "the sacred cup and the haoma the best weapons to strike and repel the evil doer Angra Mainya." (*Ibid.* p. 206.)

It is possible that Buddhistic influence replaced the intoxicating haoma by water, while the Greek to whom wine was a symbol of holy enthusiasm again changed the water into wine.

The original meaning of breaking the bread must have been that in the new dispensation a loaf is sacrificed on the altar and not an animal. The oldest account of the Lord's last supper is found in Cor. xi, 23 et seq., and it is noteworthy that St. Paul neither mentions the Paschal Lamb nor the wine.

## PARALLELISM WITH LÂO-TSZE.

Although it is true that the coincidences between Buddhism and Christianity are remarkable and numerous, and that their differences are easily accounted for, we must nevertheless concede that both religions may have originated independently. We possess the strange case of a similar parallelism to both Buddhism and Christianity in Lâo-tsze's philosophy which can hardly be suspected of being borrowed from either. We quote a few passages from his *Tao Teh King*, which was written about six hundred years before Christ, and almost one hundred years before Buddha. The Chinese word *tao* bears a peculiar likeness to the Greek term *logos*. It means "word," "reason," and "path or way" at the same time. The first sentence of the *Tao Teh King* reminds us of the first verse of the fourth Gospel in the New Testament, and many other passages breathe the spirit of Christian ethics. We read in the *Tao Teh King*:

"The *Tao* (word, reason, path, or briefly *logos*) that can be *taoed* (reasoned, argued with, walked on, or spoken) is not the Eternal *Tao*. The name which can be named is not the Eternal Name. (Sec. 1.)

"*Tao* produced unity; unity produced duality; duality produced trinity; and trinity produced all things. (Sec. 42.)

"Lay hold on the great form (of *Tao*), and the whole world will go to you.

"*Tao*, in its passing out of the mouth, is weak and tasteless. If you look at it there is nothing to fill the eye. If you listen to it, there is nothing to fill the ear. But if you use it, it is inexhaustible. (Sec. 35.)

"The great *Tao* is all-pervading. It can be on the right hand and also at the same time on the left. All things wait upon it for life, and it refuses none. When its meritorious work is done, it takes not the name of merit. In love it nourishes all things, and does not lord over them. It is ever free from ambitious desires. It may be named with the smallest. All things return home to it, and it does not lord over them. It may be named with the greatest.

"This is how the wise man, to the last, does not make himself great, and therefore he is able to achieve greatness. (Sec. 34.)

"Recompense injury with goodness. (Sec. 63.)

"The *Tao* of Heaven may be compared to the extending of a bow. It lowers that which is high, and it raises that which is low. (Sec. 77.)

"He who knows others is wise. He who knows himself is enlightened.

"He who conquers others is strong. He who conquers himself is mighty.

"He who knows when he has enough is rich. (Sec. 33.)

"The good I would meet with goodness. The not-good I would also meet with goodness. Virtue is good. The faithful I would meet with faith. The not-faithful I would also meet with faith. Virtue is faithful. (Sec. 49.)

"He that humbles (himself) shall be preserved entire. He that bends (himself) shall be straightened. He that is low shall be filled. He that is worn out shall be renewed. He that is diminished shall succeed. He that is increased shall be misled. Therefore the sage embraces Unity, and is a pattern for all the world. He is not self-displaying, and, therefore, he shines. He is not self-approving, and, therefore, he is distinguished. He is not self-praising, and, therefore, he has merit. He is not self-exalting, and, therefore, he stands high." (Sec. 22.)

The Buddhistic-Christian spirit of Lâo-tsze's philosophy is so striking that the suggestion has been made to trace its origin to the same sources in India from which Buddhism has sprung. But considering the fact that Buddha is almost a hundred years younger than Lâo-tsze this assumption is barely possible, not probable. And must we not grant that the Christian ethics if true may naturally develop in any country and in any age?

#### NOTHING AND THE ALL.

There are many remarkable agreements of all kinds which are due, not to a borrowing, but to a similarity of the circumstances which give rise to an idea or an event. So an Indian chief, who cannot be suspected of ever having read Cæsar, replied to the invitation of the President of the United States in almost the same terms as Ariovistus.

Among many peculiar coincidences of Buddhistic conceptions with ideas of thinkers who never came in contact with Buddhistic traditions, let me mention only one. Passerat, a late Latin poet of the sixteenth century, a native of France, (as quoted by Charles F. Neumann in his *Catechism of the Shamans*, London, Oriental Transl. Fund, 1831) says in one of his verses :

"Nihil interitus et originis expers  
Immortale Nihil, Nihil omni parte beatum.  
Felix cui Nihil est."

This expression praising the happiness of him who has attained the Nothing which knows the beginning and end of all things, the immortal nothing, which is blessed throughout, would be natural in the mouth of a Buddhist, to whom the word conveys different associations than to us, but it is startling when pronounced by a poet who in his surroundings had no chance of hearing the praises of Nirvâna.

#### A REACTION AGAINST DUALISM.

The similarity between Christianity and Buddhism must be due to a similarity of conditions. And such a similarity of conditions existed ; yet here again we have good reason to believe that these very conditions were imported from India. If Buddhism was not directly transplanted to Palestine, it still remains quite probable that the seeds at least from which it sprang were sown by Buddhists in the soil of Galilee.

The main basis of all the agreements between Buddhism and Christianity lies in their similar attitude towards a dualistic and pessimistic world-conception. It is sufficiently known how Buddhism developed from the Sâmkhya system, and there can be no question that Christianity presupposes the prevalence of similar ideas in the minds of the people among whom Jesus Christ lived and taught—not among the learned only but among the multitudes.

The Essenes formed a faction among the Jews standing in opposition to both the conservative and old orthodox Pharisees and the liberal and Hellenised Sadducees. All that is known about the Essenes reminds us of Buddhistic monk fraternities and Hindu ascetics. There was a similar movement in those days among the learned Jews of Alexandria, which developed into Neo-Platonism, represented mainly by Philo (who died 54 A. D.), Plotinus (205–270), and Porphyry (232–304).

Lassen traces Neo-Platonism and Gnosticism back to India, and Professor Weber suggests the derivation of the Græco-Christian Logos-idea from the Indian “ Vâch ” (i. e., voice, speech, word), calling attention to the fact that the divine “ Vâch,” which in Sanskrit is a feminine noun, appears in numerous passages as the consort of Prajâpati, the Creator, in union with whom and by whom he

accomplished his creation. Professor Garbe, in his remarkable article in *The Monist* (Vol. IV, No. 2), not only confirms these suppositions, but, following Leopold von Schroeder's suggestion, offers abundant evidence for the derivation of Pythagoric views from the same source, India, which thus seems to have been the cradle of all our philosophies. We consider the hypothesis of a historical connexion between Buddhism and Christianity as very probable; yet at the same time must say that whether it is true or not is of little consequence. There are enough parallels concerning which we can be sure that they are not due to a borrowing, and such parallelism alone as obtains between Lâo-tsze on the one hand and Buddhism and Christianity on the other hand, is sufficient to prove that the evolution of both religions may have taken place independently, according to a natural law.

Whether or not the Sâmkhya philosophy and its offshoot, Buddhism, were transplanted from India to the Western world, we find that the Hindus not less than the Græco-Judæan thinkers arrived at a crisis in their religio-philosophical evolution in which they perceived the difference between soul and body, mind and matter, spirituality and sense-appearing reality. This difference once understood, leads easily to wrong conclusions. Before a monistic solution of the problem is sought, the dualistic view naturally presents itself first to a superficial consideration as the simpler conception. It was quite correct to regard mind as the all-important element of man's life, but it was a mistake, although it seemed quite plausible by way of contrast, to look upon matter as the source of all evil. Thus the Sâmkhya philosophers, and, in agreement with them, the Neo-Platonists, believe in the existence of two realities, matter and soul (or rather souls, for they assume a boundless plurality of individual souls), while material existence is looked upon as the cause of all misery and pain. The body is said to be that which hampers the mind and imprisons the soul as in a dungeon, while spiritual existence, or that which produces the illumination of consciousness in man, is praised as infinite perfection and divine bliss. Thus the world is cut in twain, and the logical consequence of this dualism is pessimism. This world of ours, the world of bodily existence in



which, as they say, the soul is imprisoned, is a domain of suffering (note here also the parallelism with Plato), and the highest aim of human exertion must be salvation from the bondage of matter. Hence asceticism and self-mortification. The death of the body was longed for because promising the liberation of the soul. Now Buddha, as well as Christ, rejected pessimistic ethics; yet it is noteworthy that they did not denounce it as altogether wrong; they only forbade the enforcement of it among their disciples, and regarded it as a lower and insufficient method of attaining salvation, or rather as a phase through which he who seeks deliverance must pass. They themselves had passed through it and rejected it. Therefore they suffered it still, but boldly disavowed its principles in their own conduct.

Thus, in the dualism of both the Sâmkhya philosophy and the Essenic ethics, as also in Neo-Platonism, a great truth, the idea of the all-importance of mind, was linked to fatal errors, viz., the duality of mind and matter, the fiction of a purely spiritual empire, and the escape from the material world to the spirit-realm through the suppression and gradual mortification—mortification in the literal sense of the word, which means the reducing to a state of being dead—of all bodily existence.

Buddha and Christ were confronted by the same dualism and facing the same problem of salvation, solved the problem in the same way. Both abandoned the traditional dualism and its pessimistic applications. After having tried world-flight, fasts, and self-mortification, they gave up all further attempts at uplifting the mind by a vain struggle against the body. Yet neither Buddha nor Christ surrendered the truth contained in the dualism of their predecessors. They recognised that the purpose of life lay not in the sphere of material reality, but in the realm of mind; that the life is more than meat, and that all worldly goods serve only as means for our spiritual needs. As to the problem of evil, they surrendered the dualistic method of deliverance through asceticism for a monistic ethics of righteousness. Both Buddha and Christ found that the source of sin lay deeper than in the complications of mind with matter; that material existence is innocent of wrong-doing, and that

mind alone makes or mars the world. Lust, vanity, and hatred do not reside in the objects of our senses, but in our hearts. A wrong-directed mind is the source of sin, and a purification of the mind from its sinful desires is the sole condition of salvation. Accordingly, both Buddha and Christ abandoned world-flight and self-mortification; they both returned to the world and gave offence to those who were still under the sway of a dualistic morality; they lived among the people, preaching the new way of salvation and the attainment of the kingdom of heaven that is within us.

In saying that Buddha and Christ abandoned the ethics of dualism and proposed a new system of morality that might properly be designated as monistic, we do not maintain that either Buddha or Christ taught a monistic philosophy. Neither Buddha nor Christ were philosophers, although the former can be called a philosopher with more propriety than the latter. Both were religious leaders; Christ more so than Buddha. Buddhism and Christianity are religions and not philosophies; yet from their first appearance when their founders began to preach the new doctrine, they ushered in an era of monistic thought. By discarding pessimistic principles and proposing a melioristic morality they led the way towards a monistic world-conception. The philosophy underlying their religious faith already shows a monistic trend.

As religions are slowly expanding and developing in the course of their evolution, so they cannot have originated without due preparation. Their growth is due to natural causes and takes place according to natural laws. St. Paul is generally considered as the founder of the Gentile Church; however, the existence of a Christian congregation in Rome to which he addresses the most important one of his epistles, is alone an undeniable evidence that he was one only among many missionaries of the new faith. Apollos, it is said in Acts xviii, 24, "taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John," and Paul coming to Ephesus, found "certain disciples who had not so much as heard whether there was a Holy Ghost" and were baptised unto John's baptism.<sup>1</sup> This is

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<sup>1</sup>Acts xix, 1-2.

noteworthy. It proves that there were at that time, when Christian missionaries began to preach, Christian-like congregations who differed but slightly from those baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. It is not impossible that such communities of so-called "disciples" (which was also the name of the first Christians) were scattered even in the life-time of Christ over the whole Roman empire ; in other words, the germs of Christianity existed before Paul organised them into Christian churches.

As the Gentile Church originated before Paul, so a pre-Christian Christianity must have begun to grow before Jesus. Apollonius of Tyana, p. 99, is an exponent of this spirit. He was in many respects similar to Jesus of Nazareth and the legends which his pious admirers told of his life bear so much resemblance to the Christian Gospels and Apocrypha that Christian fanatics have jealously destroyed the greatest part of them.<sup>1</sup> In a similar way Buddhism developed in India on parallel lines with Jainism. If Gautama Siddhârtha had not appeared, Jnyâtaputra, the founder of Jainism, might have taken his place. *Vice versa*, if Buddhism which had grown so much more powerful than Jainism, had not been rooted out in India, might not Jainism have been absorbed by it so as to disappear entirely? And if Jesus of Nazareth had not become the Christ of the Western world, might not Apollonius have played a similar part in history? We do not mean to say that Apollonius was near as grand or sympathetic a figure as Jesus, we only say that his character was of that type from which mankind would be inclined to select their Christs, their Buddhas, their Saviours. He was in many respects suitable to serve as a centre of religious crystallisation, and the sacred legends would have so moulded his personality as to make

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<sup>1</sup>After his death Apollonius was worshipped with divine honors for a period of four centuries. A temple was raised to him at Tyana, which obtained from the Romans the immunities of a sacred city. His statue was placed among those of the gods, and his name was invoked as a being possessed of superhuman powers. The defenders of paganism, at the period of its decline, placed the life and miracles of Apollonius in rivalry with those of Christ ; and some moderns have not hesitated to make the same comparison. There is no reason to suppose, however, that Philostratus entertained any idea of this sort in composing his life of Apollonius.—*Encl. Brit.*, Vol. II, p. 189.

of him an incarnation of the highest moral ideal of the age. In other words, if Jesus had not appeared, we might have substantially the same religion.

#### EVOLUTION IN RELIGION.

It is the habit of all religious devotees to look upon their religion as a fixed dogma. So many Buddhists imagine that true Buddhism consists in the teachings of Gautama Buddha, and Christians in the same way trust that the whole breadth and depth of Christianity was developed by Jesus Christ in his sermons, parables, and the example he set in his life. This is not so. Buddha and Christ were the founders, the one of Buddhism, the other of Christianity. It may be true that the most important features of both religions can be traced to their personal authority, but there are many phases in the development of mankind (so, for instance, the abolition of slavery) which were not thought of at the time either of Buddha or Christ. Neither Buddha nor Christ gave us in their sermons a rule for dealing with the slave problem; yet we cannot say that their spirit of brotherly love was not a most important factor in its final solution. The development of Christianity was not completed with Christ's crucifixion, nor was Buddhism completed at Buddha's death; both continued to grow and to work out the problems of life in the spirit in which their founders had set the example. They are still growing and we must be careful not to judge them according to the past alone, but consider the life that is in them now and also their future potentialities.

Buddhism and Christianity have not only developed the germs which were sown by their founders, but have also assimilated the religious experiences of other nations.

The original Christianity of the church at Jerusalem, changed when it spread over the Roman empire; and it changed again when introduced among the Teutonic races of the North. Our present Christianity, for instance, contains more of the Teutonic race ethics than many of us, especially our clergy, are aware of and is very different, indeed, from the original Christianity of the communistic church at Jerusalem. Buddhism, too, has undergone changes. The

Hinayâna of southern Buddhism is marked by a certain negativism, while the Mahâyâna of northern Buddhism makes the positive aspect of the Dharma and of Nirvâna more prominent. Among the Tibetans this tendency of the Mahâyâna doctrines has developed a fantastic mythology and the ecclesiastical institutions of Lamaism, while the more sober Japanese appear to be quite scholarly and freer from superstition.

#### THE SUPERNATURAL IN THE NATURAL.

Taking it for granted that Buddhism and Christianity have not influenced each other and are of independent growth, their similarities will have to be regarded as the more remarkable, since they will then all the more render a special revelation theory redundant. They are a most powerful argument for a sweeping latitudinarianism, and will, if properly understood, crush the last remnant of sectarianism in Christianity. Shall we say that the injunctions: "Recompense injury with goodness," and "hatred does not cease by hatred; hatred ceases by love," have naturally developed the one in China and the other in India, while the same lofty moral thought could be attained in Judæa only through a supernatural revelation? No, the supernatural will develop everywhere according to the eternal laws of nature.

The sky, in old folklore tales, is conceived as a glassy bowl that covers the earth, and the Indians imagine themselves favored by Manitou, the Great Spirit, who located them under the very top of the heavens. Let us not imitate their narrow-mindedness by believing that we alone are blessed with the zenith of a religious revelation. God spoke not through Moses alone nor through Jesus alone. God has left no one without a witness, and he speaks to every one of his children in the same way, if they but open their minds to perceive his revelation. The Zenith is over the heads of every one who raises his eyes to look up to it, and there is no part of nature but it contains the supernatural. The natural is supernatural all through. Thus we need not wonder that the foundation-stones of Buddhism and Christianity are the same; they are of a universal nature, and we are justified in assuming that if there are rational

beings on other planets, they, too, will develop in the course of their religious evolution a religion of deliverance from evil by walking in the noble path of righteousness. Among them, too, a saviour will rise to bid them renounce their self and all selfishness, and to take refuge from the evils of existence in an all-embracing love.

We deny the existence of the supernatural in a dualistic sense ; but suppose we call such higher features of nature as appear in man's ethical aspirations hyperphysical or supernatural because they rise above the lower and purely physical elements of the universe, we must confess that the supernatural lies hidden in the natural and is destined to grow from it according to the cosmic law of existence. All living creatures face the same universe and are confronted with the same problems of life ; must we not, in the end, all come to the same conclusions, and, however different may be the modes of presenting them, adopt the same rules of conduct? In the light of a unitary world-conception the agreement between various religions ceases to be startling and finds, even on the assumption that they have developed quite independently, its natural explanation.

#### HINÂYÂNA, MAHÂYÂNA, MAHÂSÊTU.

Recognising a continued evolution in the religions of mankind, we do not look upon later Buddhism with the same contempt as is customary among many Buddhist scholars. It is true that the old Buddhism of the Hinayâna school has preserved the old traditions more faithfully and is more philosophical than religious, while the Mahâyâna school which now obtains in the North, especially in Thibet, in China, and in Japan, is more religious than philosophical, almost hiding Buddha's doctrines under an exuberant outgrowth of fantastical superstitions. We must, nevertheless, recognise in this progress from the Hinayâna, or the small vehicle of salvation, to the Mahâyâna, or large vehicle of salvation, an advance in the right direction. Buddha had taught his disciples the path of salvation and had inculcated an unbounded love for all mankind, including one's enemies. It was quite natural that his followers were anxious to extend the blessings of salvation to all mankind. The

Hinâyâna is a religion for the thinker, for the wise, for the strong ; it is not a gospel to those who are poor in spirit, who are ignorant, who are weak ; and yet it was the principle of the Master's all-comprehensive compassion to save *all* the world ! What was more natural to a true-hearted Buddhist than to make the blessing of Buddha's religion accessible to the multitudes ? The small canoe of the Hinâyâna sufficed for every one only to save himself and no one else. But what did a Buddhist care for his own salvation ? A true Buddhist had ceased to be troubled about himself. He wanted to save others. Thus the general idea of a Mahâyâna, a large conveyance of salvation, of a great ship to cross the stream of worldliness, of sin, and suffering, was a logical consequence of Buddha's doctrine, even though the methods with which this idea was realised may in many respects be regarded as a failure. Yet in judging the Mahâyâna system and its fantastical offshoots, we must consider the mental state of those nations for whom it was adapted, and it may be that a purer religion would have failed utterly where cruder allegories of what appears to us as childish superstitions exercised a beneficent influence. The Mahâyâna has changed the savage hordes of central Asia, from whom proceeded the most barbarous invaders, dreaded by all their neighbors, into a most kind-hearted people, with a sacred passion for universal benevolence and charity.

Considering the development from a Hinâyâna conception to a Mahâyâna practice as an advance, we can still less regard Christianity, even if its derivation from Buddhism were certain, as a deterioration. Buddhism, viz., the original Buddhism of Buddha, is more philosophical and more abstract than Christianity, but Christianity is more religious. Buddhism, viz., again, the original Buddhism of Buddha, is free from all mythological elements while Christianity employs a number of allegorical expressions which are both appropriate and forcible. There is the dogma of the personality of God, of the Sonship of Christ, of the quickening influence of the Holy Ghost, of the personality of Satan, of angels and devils, of heaven and hell ; and even to-day the belief in the literal meaning of all these religious symbols is counted among many Christians as the test of orthodoxy. What does it matter that during the develop-

ment of the Church they have crystallised into temporarily fixed dogmas, which sometimes threatened to ossify the properly religious spirit of Christianity? The symbolism of Christianity is after all its dross only; its essence is that ethical spirit which it has in common with Buddhism. The Christian dogmatology, if properly recognised in its symbolical nature, is most beautiful, expressive, and true, but if taken in its literal meaning commits us to irrational absurdities. He who believes in the letter of a myth, or a dogma, or a religious allegory, is a pagan, and Christian paganism is not less absurd than Lamaistic or any other paganism. Nevertheless, he who believes in a myth that contains in the garb of a parable a religious truth, and accordingly regulates his moral conduct, is better off than he who is void of any faith. The truth hidden in the myth teaches him and serves him as a guide; it comforts him in affliction, strengthens him in temptation, and shows him in an allegorical reflexion the bliss that rests upon righteousness. The Hinâyâna, in its abstractness, it appears to us, is indeed insufficient for the masses of mankind, and had to change into a Mahâyâna system before it could conquer almost half the world. Christianity, however, is more perfect even than the Mahâyâna of Buddhism, as a vehicle of salvation for the masses of mankind. While the schools of Buddhism may be compared to ships that cross the stream, Christianity is like a large and solid bridge. Christianity is a Mahâsêtu. A child may walk over in perfect safety. Christianity is, as St. Augustine says, like a water in which a lamb can wade while an elephant must swim. It is difficult to explain spiritual truths to an untrained mind, for even philosophers find it difficult to understand why we must free our souls from the thought of self and overcome all vanity, lust, hatred, and ill-will. But a young Christian heart finds it very natural. Without going through all the painful experiences which lead to the abandonment of selfishness, a Christian child having received Jesus and his all-comprehensive love into his heart is, on the start of his life, placed in the right moral attitude towards the world. Christianity has been especially successful in teaching surrender of self without at the same time disturbing the egotism so strongly developed in Western nations. In a word, Christianity extends the bliss of



righteousness not only to the ignorant who do not understand the problem of life of which Christian ethics present a practical solution, but also to those whose eyes remain still covered with the veil of *Mâyâ* ; yea, even to the little children who have never as yet heard of sin or the cause of sin. There is no more characteristic saying of Christ's than his words: "Suffer little children to come unto me."

No fault can be found either with Christianity or the symbols of Christianity, but blame rests with those who claim that the Christian symbols do not merely contain the truth in the language of parables, but that they are the truth itself, the absolute truth which must be accepted in blind faith whatever be the verdict of a rational inquiry or scientific criticism. The Christian whose faith consists in obedience to the spirit of Christ's ethics can shake hands with the Buddhist and say, we are brethren ; our religions solve the problems of life in a similar spirit, although we differ in our modes of expression. The Christian, however, whose faith is a belief in the letter of his dogmas may regard the Buddhist, be he ever so highly educated, as a pagan and Buddha as a false prophet or even "an imposter."<sup>1</sup> The latter kind of Christianity is still regarded as orthodox, but the time will come and is near at hand when its flagrant paganism will be recognised by the very authorities of the Church. The former kind of Christianity will be established as the only true Christianity, and the old narrow orthodoxy of bigotry and blind faith will be supplanted by the new broad orthodoxy of scientific truth.

Christianity, at present the second largest religion in the world, can very well become the universal religion of mankind, but there is one condition which must be fulfilled before it can gain the victory. It must discard all paganism ; it must become conscious of the symbolical element of its symbols ; it must with impartial justice recognise the truth wherever it be ; it must be courageous enough to acknowledge its own errors of former misinterpretations, and appreciate the good that is contained in other religions ; in a

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<sup>1</sup> See Spence Hardy in his *Legends and Theories of the Buddhists*, p. 207.

word, it must become a cosmic religion—truly catholic and orthodox.

What is more orthodox than that which with methodical exactness has been proved to be true, and what is more catholic than science? We must learn to understand that science is a religious revelation.

This, in essence, is the lesson which a comparison of Buddhism with Christianity can teach us: Above any Hinâyâna, Mahâyâna and Mahâsêtu is the Religion of Truth, and the truth reveals itself everywhere, to every one who has the religious spirit to seek it, and dares to find it.

EDITOR.